



Information You Need to Know About a Heart Attack

Every 40 seconds someone in the US suffers a heart attack.

All organs need oxygen to survive which is delivered through blood flow including the heart.

A heart attack occurs when the heart is deprived of oxygen.

The coronary arteries supply the heart with blood flow.

Fat and cholesterol can build up within the coronary arteries causing what is known as a plaque.

This plaque can dislodge and a blood clot forms around the plaque.

The blood clot can block the flow of blood to the heart making the heart deprived of oxygen.

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HEART ATTACK

Signs and Symptoms of a Heart Attack

A heart attack can cause discomfort in other areas of the body, such as pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

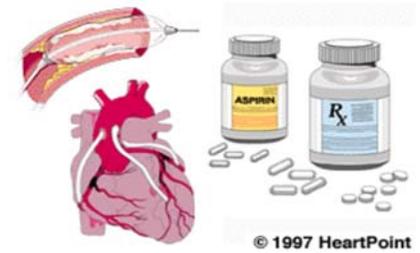
A person can also experience shortness of breath (SOB) with or without chest discomfort.

Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

Most heart attacks start slowly, with mild chest pain or discomfort. The discomfort is normally in the center of the chest and lasts more than a few minutes, or the discomfort may go away and come back.

As with men, a woman's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. However, women are more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

If you have any of these symptoms, call 911 and go to an ER immediately!



Treatment Options

There are numerous treatments for a heart attack. The type of treatment you receive will depend on the type of heart attack you had and your physician.

Common treatment include:

- **Bypass Surgery:** Treats blocked heart arteries by creating new passages for blood to flow to your heart muscle.
- **Stenting:** A stent is a wire mesh tube used to prop open an artery during angioplasty.
- **Angioplasty:** Special tubing with an attached deflated balloon is threaded up to the coronary arteries. This can also be done with a laser tip that opens up the blocked artery.

Common drugs you may be prescribed:

- Anticoagulant (Heparin, Warfarin)
- Antiplatelet agent (Plavix, Effient)
- Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitor
- Beta blocker (Atenolol, Lopressor)
- Calcium channel blocker (Cardizem, Norvasc)
- Diuretics (Lasix)

References:

<http://www.heart.org>

www.nhlbi.nih.gov